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NEXT HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE COLLECTION SET FOR MAY 5

Do you have any kind of household products, such as paints, cleansers, solvents, antifreeze, batteries or used motor oils that you know can be dangerous to the environment but you want to get rid of? How about electronics like computer equipment, old radios, mobile phones, TVs, VCRs, calculators or copiers?

Catawba County offices occasionally get calls from people wanting to know how to properly dispose of these products. The answer: keep them for just a few more weeks until Catawba County provides you with a free opportunity to dispose of them safely.

The County's next one-day household hazardous waste collection will be held at the Catawba County Government Center parking lot, off Highway 321 Business in Newton, on Saturday, May 5, 2012, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Those coming to the collection event should use the entrance from Highway 321 Business for greatest convenience. The event is open only to residents of Catawba County and only residential waste products will be accepted.

For the first time this year, Operation Pill Stoppers will also be part of the collection day, setting up collection bins to provide a safe way to dispose of old or unused medications! More than 70% of prescription drugs abusers say that they get the medications from friends or relatives for free or by theft. Keeping unused medications creates a dangerous opportunity for accidental poisonings or illicit drug use. The Catawba County Sheriff's Office has created Operation Pill Stoppers to give the public a place to clear unused or unwanted medications out of cabinets. Operation Pill Stoppers will take your unwanted drugs and incinerate them in a safe and non-hazardous manner. The drop off is anonymous, quick and easy.

Organizers of the collection say this is a very important event, because these are products which should not just be thrown away as one might throw out other garbage. These substances are hazardous and must not be poured out on the ground, thrown in with other trash or buried because they could easily contaminate ground water.

"The County has contracted with Clean Harbors to handle the collection of household hazardous waste and eCycle Secure to collect electronic waste and with the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to collect pesticides," said Amanda Kain, Catawba County's Waste Reduction Coordinator. "The contractors will be in the parking lot of the Government Center to collect a variety of household hazardous wastes that day. Categories which we will accept include: household cleaners, including drain openers, toilet bowl cleaners, oven cleaners, disinfectants and pine cleaners; paint products, such as latex and oil based paints, solvents, thinners, shellacs, varnishes, wood preservatives and sealers; automotive products including lead acid batteries, used motor oil, antifreeze, brake fluid and auto starter fluid; pesticides and



insecticides including poisons, aerosols, and weed killers; and miscellaneous materials such as acids, bases, kerosene, household batteries, photographic chemicals, pool chemicals, gas cylinders and metallic mercury.”

Catawba County will again accept a wide range of computer-related and other electronic materials for proper disposal. These include cell phones, old television sets, computer monitors, laptops, floppy drives, hard drives, ink/toner cartridges, modems, answering machines, CD players, tape players, calculators, copiers, duplicators, electronic typewriters, pagers, remote controls, scanners, stereos, radios, cable and wire, and VCRs and microwaves.

Data and data bearing devices will be destroyed. The County cannot guarantee the non-disclosure of any information left on equipment.

Certain kinds of particularly hazardous wastes which must be disposed of in special ways will not be accepted at the May 5 collection. These include: radioactive wastes; biologically active or infectious wastes; unknown gases or chemicals; dioxin related waste; explosives and tires.

Contractors will have in place procedures to make sure the waste is properly disposed. Waste collected from citizens who come to the Government Center on May 5 will be placed in a designated area for further identification and separation into different hazard classes. Most of the waste products will be safely consolidated or loose packed at the site to reduce the County's costs. Paints, automotive fluids, solvents, cleaners and paint-related products with a low solids content will also be consolidated on-site, then packaged in the largest practical container in compliance with all regulations and facility requirements. Packaged waste products will be placed in another staging area for inventory and final inspection. Bulk liquids, loose packs and aerosols will be packaged in separate boxes, drums or pails, as needed. Electronic equipment will be placed into a separate area.

This year's collection event is sponsored by the Catawba County Department of Utilities and Engineering and co-sponsored by Republic Services, the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Catawba Center, and the North Carolina State Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and the Catawba County Sheriff's Office.

For more information on this one day collection, you may contact the Catawba County Department of Utilities and Engineering at 828-465-8217.

